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MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT JERRY JOHN RAWLINGS, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

May I, on behalf of the people and Government of Ghana, and in my own name, extend to the Ninth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development my best wishes.

For us in Ghana, this Conference which is taking place in Midrand in the Republic of South Africa is significant in a number of ways.

We all recall that the first and the last time a session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was held in Africa was in the sister Republic of Kenya in 1976, exactly 20 years ago. Since then, a number of momentous events have taken place in international relations, one of the most historic of which has been the establishment of a multi-racial democratic society in the Republic of South Africa.

The convening of UNCTAD IX in this beautiful country is, therefore, a consummation of the valiant efforts of men and women of vision of the Republic of South Africa. This Conference is a clear vote of confidence in the new South Africa.

For 30 years, UNCTAD has served the developing countries as a platform for articulating their views on the shortcomings of the international economic order which evolved after the Second World War. In many developing countries, the economic and social circumstances of the average population have deteriorated with time. While it is true that the solution of economic problems has not been facilitated by inappropriate policies, it cannot be denied that, in a very large measure, multilateral institutions for

development have not been able to rally fully to the challenges of development posed by the needs of newcomers to the international economic arena. This situation has been compounded by factors affecting the economies of our development partners which have induced a degree of reluctance on their part in providing development assistance, especially financial resources.

My Government is firmly of the view that until there are innovative approaches to the problems of development, the emerging international economic order will continue to witness the aggravation of poverty, unemployment and social disorder to the detriment of all our nations.

As one of the most universal institutions which provides a unique platform for a global partnership for development, UNCTAD should be reinforced to confront this challenge and enhance the capacity of governments, particularly those of the developing countries, to find solutions to their various and persistent economic problems.

The issues before the Ninth Session of the Conference are vital to the very survival of millions who do not have the opportunity to be here to make their views known, nor their voices heard. It is the task of your Conference to represent those views and ensure that your conclusions hold out for the disadvantaged of the world a meaningful prospect of a better quality of life.

It is my hope that the Ninth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development will make that decisive contribution to humanity's well-being.

May your deliberations be crowned with success.